

DIRECTIONS

FOR

A GODLY LIFE;

Especially for

Communicating at the
LORDS TABLE.

Intended first for private use;
now published for the good
of those who desire the
safety of their own Souls,
and shall be pleased to make
use hereof.

By *HENRY TOZER*,
Bachelor in Divinity and late
Fellow of *Ex.Coll.* in Oxford

The Eleventh Edition.

PSAL. 69. 33.

*Seek ye after God, and your
souls shall live.*

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TO THE
HONOURABLE
GENTLEMAN
Mr. LORENZO CART,

Son to the R. Honourable
Vicount *FAULKLAND*
Lord Deputy of *Ireland*.

Worthy Sir,

Since the time that it first
pleased your Honourable
Father to commend you unto the
Religious government of this
Colledge wherein you now live,
your carriage hath been so sweet
and lovely, that it hath won, I
dare say, the heart of each
member thereof to a readiness
of respecting this your good-
ness, as in word so in deed, ac-
cording to their several places

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The Epistle

and dignities. Neither could I suffer my self, standing in a more near relation than any of the rest unto you, to come short in the performance of this office; Wherefore I here offer unto your religious meditation this ensuing Treatise, collected and composed first for private use, but now published, not to gain the applause of any (from which my own unworthiness sufficiently checks me) but chiefly for these two respects: first to testifie that love which I both owe unto you, and am ready to make good. Secondly, and more principally, to invite you to a due consideration of those holy duties therein contained, that by a seasonable knowledge of the same, your actions may be the more carefully ordered, and Gods name
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Dedictory.

in the faithful practice thereof more fully glorified. The subject is a matter not of humane learning, but of Gods service, and therefore a part without exception, the greatest; the due receiving of the holy Communion. A duty, I confess, better known, than well considered; more often thought on, than sincerely practiced: if it were not so, bad actions would not be so commonly priviledged by the Greatness of the Agents, as now they are; but they to whom God hath given most honour here, would ever think it their greatest glory to honour him most again by their faithful service unto him. And good reason why they should, if they remember that to whom God hath given most, of them he requireth most again; yea such

The Epistle

who have the precedence of others in place and dignity, may do well to consider, that, in making a conscience of matters of Religion, and leading their lives according to the Rules thereof, they do not only provide well for the salvation of their own souls, but give a good occasion to others also, while they happily provoke them to the practice of the same duties by their good examples: which are ever held as lively precepts, and serve for a secret reproof to an ingenious inferior, when he shall see himself defective in that; wherein his betters have gone before him. Let the Honourable and Mighty thus remember how far they shall honour God by a religious life, and then they cannot but acknowledge that it is their glo-

Dedicatory.

glorious freedom to be his humble Servants. Others if they please, may take notice of this perswasion; and perhaps they would, if I were not unworthy to advise them: but now I speak to you alone, whom I well know willing, as freely to make use of others help, so truly to accept of this from me. Your own happiness you must confess, with thanks to God, that by his providence you live in that Society, whose Religion is as firm as undefiled, where you cannot say you want the rule either of loving precepts or example, according unto which you have already joyned with the rest in a religious communicating at the Lords Table. My desire is to perswade you to a constant perseverance in what you have

The Epistle Dedicatory.

so well begun; that so devoting your tender years with those that follow to the service of the Almighty, you may again from him receive, and fully enjoy, his daily blessings, which doth ever attend on those that truly seek him. Some Meditations, which perhaps may serve for your directions, I here present unto your view, in which I freely acknowledge almost nothing mine. (to prevent the censure of curious Readers) but only the labour of composing: this I now commend to you, and you unto the blessed providence of the most Highest, resting ever

Yours truly

in the Lord,

HENRY TOZER.

DIRECTIONS

For
The due Receiving of
the Holy Communion.

CHAP. I.

*What a Sacrament is, and
how many there be.*

A Sacrament is an outward visible sign of an inward and invisible grace ordained by God, whereby he doth seal unto us his covenant of Grace made in the blood of Christ, and

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we again testifie our faith and piety towards him : so that it is both a sign in respect of the thing signified, and a seal, in respect of the Covenant sealed unto us. The word Sacrament doth properly signifie an Oath, whereby Soldiers bound themselves unto ~~their General~~: whence it is taken to signifie that Obligation, whereby we tye our selves to the blessed and sweet service of Jesus Christ: for hereby we, as Christs Soldiers, first bind our selves by promise of obedience to fight under the Lords Banner, against the world, the flesh and the Devil: Secondly, we put on the cognisance and Arms, the colours and marks of Christ, by professing our Faith
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in him, so that it may appear unto the World to whom we do belong.

Now Sacraments are of two sorts.

First, Of the Old Testament, which were two.

First, Circumcision.

Secondly; the Passover.

The first was ordained for a sign of entrance into the Covenant.

The second for an assurance of confirmation of, and continuance in the same: both which are now abolished, and instead of them, we now have the Sacraments of the New Testament, which are likewise two.

First, Baptism answerable to Circumcision.

Secondly, The Lords Supper

per to the Passover : both signified by that water and blood, which issued out of the side of Christ, when it was pierced by the Souldiers on the Cross. Of these the first is called the Sacrament of our Nativity or entrance, because by it we are assured that we are received into the Covenant of Grace, and so are regenerate and belong to the flock of Christ. The second is called the Sacrament of our growth and perseverance whereby we grow up in Christ, and are assured that we shall be still kept in this estate. So that both are necessary: the one to assure us of our entrance into, and the other of our continuance in, the estate of Grace: for although

though that Grace once conferr'd cannot be lost, yet our assurance doth often want strengthening, by reason of our manifold temptations, against which we are comforted by the remembrance of Christs death and passion: which doth also teach us why the Sacrament of Baptism is received but once, and the Lords Supper often, because our birth is signified by our Baptism, and we can be born but once, but we daily stand in need of food and strengthning, and therefore we often receive the Supper of the Lord, that our souls may be nourished unto life everlasting.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.*What the Lords Supper is.*

THat we may rightly understand the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, we must know two things.

1. What it is.
2. What belongs to the due receiving of it.

For the first: The Lords Supper is a Sacrament, consisting of Bread and Wine lawfully consecrated, and distributed: instituted by Christ himself for a continual remembrance of the Death and Passion of Christ, and the benefits which we receive thereby.

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This institution was at Christs last Supper after he had eaten the Passover with his Disciples, so that it is called a Supper in respect of the time of the institution; and the Lords Supper in respect of the Author, the Lord Christ: as also in respect of the end thereof, which is partly to set forth the Lords Death, and the Spiritual food therein received, namely the Body and Blood of Christ himself.

In this Sacrament we must consider two things.

1. The parts.

2. The end.

The parts are two.

First, The outward signs.

Secondly, The thing signified.

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The signs are either representing, namely, the Elements themselves: or applying signs, which are the actions about those Elements.

The Elements are two, Bread and Wine: not Bread only, but both, according to Christs institution: and that asunder, not the Bread dipt in the Wine, as some will have it, because Christs blood was shed out of his body for our sins, and we are to receive these Signs as representing Christ, not whole, but wounded and pierced.

Now Christ chose these Elements before any other, because they best serve to set forth Christs Body and Blood; for as Bread by diverse breakings and pressings comes to be

be perfect, yea the chiefeſt food of our bodies, ſtill giving a good reliſh, when other things do not, and is alſo more common to all, than any other: So the Body of Chriſt by many torments was made the chief nourishment of our ſouls, remaining always moſt ſweet and pleaſant, and common to all that can receive him by Faith: and as Wine doth cheriſh and comfort us, ſatiſfie our thirſt, purge away many corrupt humours, and maketh us bold and adventurous: ſo the blood of Chriſt revives and glads our drooping ſouls, ſatiſfieth our ſpiritual thirſt, purgeth us from all our ſins, and makes us couragious againſt all fear of our enemy the Devil.

Again,

Again, as Bread is made of many grains into one loaf, and Wine of many grapes into one cup: so we partaking thereof, and of Christ, by Faith are made one with him as our head, and also one among our selves as members of his body. Thus of the Elements.

The actions in this Sacrament are of two sorts.

1. Of the Minister.

2. Of the Communicants.

The actions of the Minister are these.

1. Setting apart.

2. Blessing of the Elements, whereby is signified, that Christ Jesus was set apart and sanctified for us, as it is *John 17. 19,*

3. Brea-

3. Breaking and powring out. And

4. Distributing to the Communicants; whereby is signified that Christs Body was crucified, and his Blood shed, and that the benefits thereof are offered unto us, if we have Faith to receive them, as it is *John 3. 15. He was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should have life everlasting.*

The Actions of the Communicants are two.

1. Taking.

2. Eating and drinking.

By which is signified that they, which receive benefit by Christ, must receive him by Faith, applying his merits to their own souls, as *John 1.*

12. *As many as received him,*

to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name.

Thus of the signs: the thing signified is the Body and Blood of Christ, with the benefits, which we receive thereby, namely the strengthening and refreshing of our souls in the remission of our sins: and this we receive, not of the Minister (for he gives only the signs) but of God himself, apprehending the same by our Faith: for Christ is not signifi'd in these signs as in a picture, but exhibited unto us, being himself present in the Sacrament, though not corporally to the Bread and Wine, yet spiritually to our Faith; for though *his Body be in Heaven, and*
must

must there remain until the last day, as it is *Acts* 3. 2. yet we may feed on him spiritually by Faith, by applying his death and passion unto our sinful souls: so that there is one union between Christ and the Elements, which is Symbolical: and another between Christ and us, which is spiritual and real.

The ends of this Sacrament are twofold.

1. In respect of others.

2. In respect of our selves.

In respect of others, to testify unto them that Faith which we profess, that so they seeing our readiness herein, may have thir hearts also stirred up to such good duties.

In respect of our selves,
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it concerns either what we have received from, or what we are to return to God. In the first respect it serveth,

First for remembrance: Namely, of the death of Christ; for, *as often as we receive this, we shew the Lords death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

Secondly, for confirmation unto us; and that, both of our union amongst our selves; as 1. Cor. 10. 17. *For we being many are one bread and one body, for we all partake of one bread*: as also of our Communion with Christ; for as the Bread and Wine are turned into the substance of our bodies, so we by faith are united unto Christ, and made flesh of his flesh; *for his flesh*
is

a Godly Life. 15

is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed, Joh. 9. 55. and for this cause it is called the Communion.

In the second respect concerning that which we are to return unto God, it serves to testifie our thankfulness to God for his mercy in giving us his Son, and in him all things, and assuring us thereof by this Seal: which we cannot but do, when we consider the torments that he endured for our finnes, which were indeed the very nailes and spear that pierced him: and for this cause it is called the Eucharist, because in it we offer up our thanks unto God; and so also it may be called a Sacrifice, not that we do here-
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in offer up Christ unto God,
 (for Christ himself at once
 finished this offering of his
 Body on the Cross) but be-
 cause we offer up our thank-
 ful hearts unto God for his
 mercy in Christ, so that it is
 a sacrifice, not of Christ but
 of our thankfulness.

CHAP. III.

*The necessity of receiving the
 Lords Supper.*

THAT we may receive this
 Sacrament as we ought,
 we must consider two things,
 1. the necessity; 2. the right
 manner of receiving the same.
 As for the first, we must
 know that it is not a thing in-
 differ.

different for us to receive, or not to receive at our pleasure, but that we ought to do it (though not every Sabbath after the custome observed in the Primitive Church, yet without fail, as often as occasion is offered, according to the example of those in the *Acts*, who continued stedfast in breaking of bread, Acts 2. 42.

The necessity of which duty will further appear, if we consider these two things. 1. The principal cause, which often keeps us from it. 2. The motives, which may draw us unto it.

First, that which makes us backward in the performance of it, is unquestionless the policy of our Arch-enemy,

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my, the Devil, who strives by all means to draw us away, either by a careless neglect of our chiefest good, to feed rather on our own foolish imaginations (as he did them in the Gospel, who had rather *see their grounds, or prove their Oxen, then taste of that Supper* to which they were invited, *Luke 14. 18, 19.*) or else by a timorous fearfulness of our own unworthiness to approach unto so holy a banquet, as this is. And if truly we could but see that this is his doing, we would by all meanes strive against his temptations; for, who amongst us would not endeavour to the utmost, so far to resist his temporal enemy, as that he should

should not be able to hurt him either in body or in goods? and shall we be more careful for the preservation of earthly bodies, than of our heavenly souls, which Christ Jesus hath redeemed by his precious blood? God forbid; we must know that **G O D** expects more at our hands, and that our souls are never so safe, as when they are in greatest opposition, and do that which is most displeasing unto our chiefest enemy, the Devil: for the more we please him, the less we please God, and the nearer we are to him, the farther we are from God.

The motives which may draw us to the performance of this duty, are taken from a due consideration of these

two things. 1. Who it is which inviteth us unto it. 2. What be the consequents of receiving or not receiving.

He which inviteth us, is God himself, whose Ordinance it is; and who requires it at our hands as a principal part of his service: and therefore as often as we omit it, we may be sure that we offend him; which he himself testified in threatening to *cut off that soul from his people, which should forbear to keep the Passover*, Num. 9. 13. and if so, then doubtless the neglect of this Sacrament, wherein Christ is so fully exhibited unto us, is very displeasing unto him; which is also exprest in the parable of the great Supper, *Luke 14. 24.*
None

None of these men which were bidden, shall taste of my Supper : Why? because they came not when they were invited; and if we refuse to come when the Lord calls, who knows whether he will give us life until the next invitation? let us therefore take the Lords offer, while it is to day, lest we be cut off before the morrow.

The next motive is taken from the consequents, and that 1. of not receiving. If we receive not, we offer a twofold injury; the one to Christ, the other to our selves.

To Christ two ways. 1. In contemning his Ordinance, who commanded his Disciples to receive it, 1 Cor. 11. 24. and in them us. 2. In neg-

lecting his love towards us; who (as a Father on his death-bed) in the night that he was betrayed, bequeathed this seal and pledge of his love unto us, which therefore ought to be right dear unto us, and at no time neglected when it is offered.

Again, If we receive not, we injure our selves, and that also two ways. 1. In respect of our name and profession; for if we come not when others do, we expose our selves to the censure of them, shewing that we are at least neglecters, if not contemners of GOD's Ordinance, *who will have all to come to it, Mat. 26. 27.* yea that we have not the life of a Christian in us: for *whosoever eateth not the flesh of*
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the Son of man, and drinketh
not his blood, hath no life in
him. Jo. 6. 53. 2. We injure
our selves from the benefits
thereof, for the remembrance
of Christs death and passion (if
duly considered) cannot but
be a great comfort unto us,
which we put from us, as of-
ten as we omit the Lords
Supper: and thus much we
may assure our selves, that
the Devil will be ready to
take the least occasion to sug-
gest other meditations unto
us: and what a miserable thing
is it for us to be exercised in
our own pleasures, or such
like, when others, with whom
we are bound to be present
are reverently gathered to-
gether, to the comfort of
their own souls, to feed at

the Lords Table? If we say that we are then exercised in other good duties, as reading the Word of God, or such like, we must know that such duties, (good in themselves) are not acceptable to God at such times: and who knows, seeing that herein we neglect the Lords Ordinance, how far he will give the Devil leave to tempt us, and draw us away, even from those duties also, to wicked imaginations.

2. The Consequents of receiving cannot but invite us to a constant performance of this duty. Now these consequents respects either God, or our selves. That which respects God, is our duty of thankfulness and praise, which
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herein we offer unto him for his mercy: which is very pleasant unto him, and necessary to be performed of us: because *he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever towards them that fear him:* and how then can we but with *David, have our hearts ready to sing, and praise him with the best member that we have,* Psal. 108. 1.

That which respects our selves, is the benefit which we receive thereby: which is twofold. 1. General. 2. more Special. The General benefits, which we receive by the Lords Supper, are chiefly two.

1. A supply of all our wants, which we shall be sure to have if we receive aright: for he, *which eateth the flesh of*
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Christ,

Christ, shall never hunger, and he which drinketh his blood, shall never thirst, as Christ himself hath promised: neither need we doubt of the truth hereof: for, he is full of grace and truth, Joh. 1. 14. and in him dwelleth all fulness, Col. 1. 19. and how then can we want any thing, if we possess him that hath all things?

2. An excellent rule to our whole life: for when we hereby consider Gods great love unto us, we cannot (if there be any love or fear of God in us) but be careful to avoid any thing, which may be displeasing unto him: so that hereby our bodies are made more obedient unto our souls, and our souls unto God.

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The special benefits which we receive by the Lords Supper, is in regard of our faith: and this again respects either our selves and others, or else our selves alone.

The first is, a testifying of our faith unto others: for hereby we both shew unto others the faith which we profess, and also by our example stir them up to the performance of the same duty: in this respect therefore it is necessary we should often receive.

In the second respect it is a confirmation and increase of that faith, which we have in us: wherein we are to endeavour by all means to continue, as *St. Paul* taught the Disciples, *Acts* 14. 22. and beware that we fall not from.

from our steadfastness, *but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:* as it is 2. Pet. 3. 18. whereof we cannot but be careful, if we consider our weakness; for we are ever subject to Apostasie, and our faith is exceeding weak; as we may plainly see by our coldness in prayer and other good duties, by our fear of death, and by our love of this world: for the strengthening of which, Christ hath left unto us this Sacrament, as a special means conducing thereunto: for the Covenant which our Faith taketh hold of, as it is contained in the word of GOD, so it is sealed unto us by this Sacrament: and therefore Christ
calls

calls the Cup, *The Cup of the New Testament*, because it seals unto us the Covenant of GOD in the New Testament, accomplished in the shedding of Christs blood. Now if a King should in pity and compassion send a pardon under his Seal unto a poor distressed prisoner; would we not judge that prisoner unworthy of the benefit thereof, if he should either wilfully refuse it, or carelessly neglect it? Questionless we would: yet such is our care before God, who, as Kings of Kings, hath sealed unto us by this Sacrament a full remission of all our sins: If we therefore shall either wilfully condemn, or at our pleasure receive this pledge
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of his love, what can we expect at Gods hands, but a just removal of this his favour from us? Surely if we joyn the consideration of our own weakness, which so much needeth help, with the meditation of Gods mercy, who so freely giveth it, we cannot but acknowledge our own misery, if we neglect it: wherefore as we fear him, and tender the good of our own souls, let us be careful in the due performance of this so weighty a business. But some are wont to frame these excuses for their absence.

1. The often receiving of this Sacrament may breed a disesteem thereof; and therefore it is safer sometimes
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to abstain. To which I answer, that in matters temporal (as pleasures, and such like) the often use may breed contempt, or at least neglect, as it often doth, but in spiritual things it rather breeds a greater desire, because the more we feel and know the goodness of them, the more we seek after them; yet if it so come to pass, that by often receiving, we begin to undervalue the worth of it; we must consider, that this neglect ariseth not from the often use of the thing, but from our corrupt nature; for this exercise is Gods own Ordinance; always attended with his blessing, if rightly received; appointed as a means to stir up, and
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increase our zeal and devotion, and therefore it is not likely that it should hinder it. Let not this therefore keep us from the Lords Table, but let us rather come, that it may be a means to increase our Piety.

2. Some will say; I am not prepared, and therefore dare not come: but this indeed is no excuse; for we must know that we ought to be always prepared, our whole life should be a continual preparation, as to all other good duties, so especially to this; being ever ready when the Lord shall call, as our Saviour admonisheth us, *Mat. 24. 44.*

3. Others will urge, I am to take a journey, or to be employed in such or such a business,

finess, and therefore I cannot come: Well, if this journey or the like, must of necessity be performed, thy excuse is the safer; but if it may be any way avoided (as oftentimes it may) assure thyself, this is to prefer thy own pleasure before that which God commands: a day will certainly come, wherein we must give an account for the neglect of the least of Gods Ordinances: and then it will be said of such pretences, *Who requireth these things at thy hands?*

4. Some are wont to urge; I am not in charity by reason of some wrong which hath been offered to me, and therefore I ought not to come. This indeed is an
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excuse too common: but we must know, that if we be not in Charity, it is our own fault; for we ought to be in Charity, and still to preserve it: and certainly a miserable thing it is, that we should *prefer to feed on our own malice, rather then to eat of the Lords Supper*; this is to hurt our selves more than we need, even to wrong our selves because others have wronged us; we should rather seek all means of reconciliation, that so we may remove those impediments of Piety and Religion, and come the more freely to the Lords Table.

5. Some thus plead for their absence; I am afraid to approach unto the Lords
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Table by reason of mine infirmities which are in me, and therefore I had rather sometimes to refrain, lest I come unworthily, which is a very fearful thing. It is so indeed, but we must consider, that our staying away is no comfort unto us in this case, but rather a means to make us worse, and to pull down God's Judgments upon us: we should rather remember the goodness of God, that inviteth us, promising to refresh all those that are heavy laden with their sins, Matth. 11. 28. not putting us off for our infirmities: for if there be a willing mind, he accepteth us according to that which we have, and not according to that which we have not, 1 Cor. 8. 12. though

though we want that perfection which others have; yet, if we have a true desire to be refreshed by the merits of Christ, and have a sincere heart before God, he will accept us according to this. Whensoever therefore the Devil shall tempt thee to draw thee away by the consideration of thy own infirmity, cheer up thy self with the comfort of the blind man in the Gospel, Mark 10. 46. *Be of good comfort, behold he calleth thee:* say unto thy self, Christ Jesus hath invited me, and hath promised to accept me, if my heart be sincere, humble, and willing: why then should the consideration of my infirmities keep me from it?

6. Others thus reply: I desire to receive, but I am conscious unto my self of some crying finnes which I have committed before God, for which I have not yet sufficiently repented: and how then can I partake of this holy Banquet in the presence of GOD? Is it so? art thou poor, and yet wilt thou refuse Gold when it is offered unto thee? who will then pity thee for thy poverty? art thou desperately sick, and wilt thou not seek unto the Physitian for means of recovery? who will then bemoan thee for thy disease? Behold, Christ Jesus is the Physitian of thy soul, as well able to heal it of all its diseases, as he did the
bodies

bodies of those, which came unto him, of their infirmities: forsake not then this heavenly Physitian, but labour by a serious repentance to discharge thy conscience of those thy sins, and then come speedily unto him: it is the counsel of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 11.* who biddeth us to *examine, and then eat*, not go away: *first examine, then eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup.* If thou say, I had rather stay till the next opportunity, that I may have the more time to repent; consider, that the longer thou stayest, the more sins thou wilt run into, and then it will be so much the harder to repent as thou oughtest: and besides that, how dost thou know whe-

whether God will give thee grace and time to repent then or not? he hath promised indeed to have mercy upon a sinner, at what time soever he shall repent; but he hath not promised to give him grace to repent when he will: Seek the Lord therefore while he offereth himself unto thee, that thou maiest find mercy when thou seekest it.

Lastly, some in a proud manner thus excuse, (or rather justify their absence.) I do already sufficiently believe whatsoever is proposed in the Word of God; and therefore what need have I to receive this Sacrament so often, as a seal to confirm my faith? it doth no way confer grace unto me; and
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my faith is so firm, that I
perswade my self I need not
a seal to strengthen it so
much as others do, whose
faith is weaker, wherefore
I think that I may some-
times forbear. But know,
O vain man which thus dis-
putest with thy God, that this
is Gods Ordinance, a prin-
cipal part of his service, which
therefore ought diligently
to be performed, though it
did no way profit us, even
because God had command-
ed it: yea when we have
done all those things which
are commanded us, we must
say that *we are unprofitable ser-
vants, we have done but that
which was our duty to do*, Luk.
17. 10. Besides, is thy faith
so strong that it needs no fur-
ther

I ther strengthening? dost thou not daily perceive in thee a weakness of understanding in matters of Piety and Religion, a frailty in thy memory, and a continual disorder in thy affections? if not, know thus much, that it is a misery to want, but a greater misery not to be sensible of our wants: and this also know for a certain truth, that when thou findest in thy self either none, or at leastwise a small desire of hearing God's Word, and receiving the Sacrament, know, I say, that there is surely some sin or other in thee not well repented of, which cloeth thy soul, that it cannot delight in those spiritual exercises. Let us therefore

indeavour to come to the Lords Table as often as we are invited: and when we do come, let us take heed that we come not for fashion sake, or to please men, or in any opinion of our own merit in this action: for this is not a celebration, but a prophanation of the Lords Ordinance, because herein we serve not God, but our selves, which is a fearful thing: for God is not as man, that he should be deceived: neither seeth he as man seeth, for man judgeth only according to the outward appearance, but God searcheth the very heart and reins, and will one day as certainly punish the prophaners of his Ordinance, as the contemners there.

thereof. Wherefore, as we ought in the first place to be fully perswaded of the necessity; so should we in the second, by all means labour to come to the knowledge of the right manner of receiving: which is the next thing to be considered.

CHAP. IV.

The necessity of preparation.

HE which desires to receive at the Lords Table in a right manner, must make conscience of three duties, which are necessarily to be performed.

I. A diligent preparation before.

2. A seasonable Meditation in the time of receiving.

3. A Religious Practice after the same in our life and conversation.

In the first (as before in the matter of receiving) we must take notice of two things First, The Necessity. Secondly, The right manner of Preparation.

The necessity will plainly appear, if we consider these two things. First in whose presence it is, that we are to receive. Secondly, the danger which we bring on our selves by not being prepared.

As for the first, we are to sit, and feed in the presence of the Lord himself. Now
if

if any, even the best of us, should be invited by a King to his Princely Table, he would be careful to present himself (if he reverence his presence) in the best manner that he could, putting on then especially (if he have any better than other) his best apparel, and disposing all things in the most decent order, that so he might be the better accepted: if so, with what fear and reverence should we then approach unto the Table of this King of Kings, when he inviteth us? who stand there ready, attended with his Angels to behold those, which present themselves, and will soon espie out that man, who shall dare to approach before him,

not having on his wedding-garment: and what can such expect, but, with the man in the Gospel, *a casting out into utter darkness?* Matth. 22.

13. Neither must we think to deceive the Lord with an hypocritical out-side, for he looketh not to the outward gesture only, but to the inward part of the soul: it is not so much a clean hand or curious attire which maketh us accepted of God, as a pure heart, and a cleansed soul, adorned with faith and repentance: we may for a time deceive mortal men, such as our selves: but when the secrets of our hearts shall be made manifest, then shall our hypocrisie, as well as our negligence, be laid open to
our

our destruction. Let us therefore humble our selves before God, and prepare our selves aright, that we may escape the danger which will otherwise fall upon us: which is the second thing to be considered in the Necessity of preparation. The danger of not being prepared is particularly set forth unto us by considering the offence which we herein commit, and the reward thereof.

If we come unprepared, and so receive unworthily, our offence is no less then to be *guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ*, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. 11. 27. that is, we offer special disgrace and indignity unto Christ, in not receiving him with that reverence

rence which we ought:
which offence, as it is in
it self very hainous, so it
draws on us a fearful pu-
nishment: for the Prophet
Jeremiah hath pronounced
him *accursed that doth the*
work of the Lord deceitfully,
Jerem. 48. 10. and if it be so
in other things, which are of
less moment, what can we
expect for the abusing of this
so weighty a matter? The
Apostle setteth down at full
the fearfulness hereof; when
he saith, 1 Cor. 11. 29. that
he which eateth and drinketh
unworthily, eateth and drinketh
his own damnation: than
which, what can be more ter-
rible? Neither is the Scrip-
ture silent in shewing us the
Judgments of God upon such
offen-

offenders; as we may plainly see, both in the Old Testament, in the suddain death of *Uzza*, for rash touching of the Ark: and also in the New, in the *binding hand and foot*, for want of the *wedding garment*. Wherefore let the danger hereof move us to a careful preparation, before we presume to come unto the Lords Table. But some may say: I perswade my self, that I can by no means be worthy to receive this Sacrament, and how then can I receive worthily? it is true, if we truly consider our own unworthiness, and the excellency of this Sacrament, we cannot by any means become worthy thereof: but this must be our com-

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fort, That he is truly worthy, whom God in mercy accepteth as worthy: and so he will us, if we come unto him in humility and reverence. Let us therefore, according to the Apostles rule, *first try and examine our selves; and then eat of this Supper:* which that we may the better do, we ought in the next place to take notice of the right manner of preparation.

CHAP. V.

*Concerning Examination
in general.*

FOR our better performance of the duty of preparation, we must be careful to
see

set aside a convenient time before the Communion : wherein, laying aside all other impediments, we ought seriously to be exercised in three duties. 1. A diligent examination of our fitness, and worthiness to receive. 2. A comfortable premeditation of the benefits, which we are to receive. 3. Earnest prayer unto God for a blessing upon our endeavours ; that so we may be accepted to receive those benefits.

In our examination we are to consider, 1. To whom this duty belongs : 2. How it is to be performed.

The first we learn from S. Paul, *1 Cor. 11. 28.* who biddeth every man to try and examine himself : so that we our selves
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are to examine our selves. Indeed the Ministers of the word of God, and all such, to whom God hath committed the charge and care of others, ought carefully to try and examine those which belong unto them, that so they may be more fit: and inferiours ought also willingly to submit themselves unto their tryal: yea, if it be not offered, to seek their help when they doubt of any thing, that so by their directions they may the more chearfully go on. These are duties, which God requires at the hands of all, the neglect whereof will one day fall heavy upon those, which shall fail in the due performance thereof. Yet this is not sufficient, for we are, for the most part,

part, full of hypocrisie, ready to hide our sins from others: yea we are so witty in iniquity, that we can behave ourselves so smoothly, in respect of the outward shew, that others shall find no fault in us at all, though notwithstanding our consciences do all the while accuse us of some sins lurking within us: wherefore we are commanded also to try and examine every man himself in particular.

This Examination must be twofold. First, General. Secondly, Particular. In the first we must examine ourselves in these two things, 1. Whether we be in the number of the faithful or not: which is very needful to be considered, otherwise we
par-

partake in vain : for as our bodies can receive no nourishing and strengthening from the food which we daily receive, unless they have some life in them before : so neither can our souls, if they be void of the life of grace, receive any comfort by this spiritual food in the Lord's Supper, which doth continue and encrease life, where it finds it, but works none, where there is none before, Let us therefore in the first place diligently try whether Christ be in us or not : of which we shall the more fully assure our selves, if we can find this perswasion in us, that we (as our fore-fathers were) *are strangers and pilgrims here*, Heb. 11. 13. *looking*

ing for a city (as Abraham did) which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God, and that we are made free from the bondage of sin by the Son of God, Christ Jesus, John 8. 26. and so with David, put our whole trust and rely only on his mercy. Psal. 52. 9. 2. We are to make tryal of our readyness, whether we be willing and have a desire to partake of the Lords Supper or no. A willing mind God requireth of those, which offered any thing for the building of the Tabernacle: as it is, Exod. 25. 2. and of those, which offered any burnt-offerings, Levit. 19. 5. If so in these, which were but shadows of things to come; much more doth he expect it at our hands in the per-

performance of this duty, which is the substance it self. Neither yet let us here deceive our selves, thinking that a bare consent and willing mind is sufficient; it is an hungry desire and appetite, as well as willingness to receive meat offered; yea that especially, which testifieth a good disposition in the Stomack: and God requireth in all his service, (therefore in this also) that *we serve him with all our heart, and with all our soul.* Deut. 10. 12. and *blessed are they, which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled,* Matth. 5. 6. For want of this desire it is, that many, when they come to the Lords Table are never the better, because

cause God, as he inviteth, so he feedeth none but those that *hunger and thirst*, *Isaiah 55. 1.* Let us therefore try and examine our selves whether we can say with *David, Psal. 42. 1.* *Like as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God: my soul is a thirst for God; yea even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?* If we can find this desire in us, then happy are we: if not, let us humble our selves before God, and beseech him to work and stir up in us the good motion of his spirit, that so we may attain to some measure of this thirst, and from that go on farther to a particular examination of our fitness to receive.

CHAP. VI.

*The examination of our
Knowledge.*

IN our particular Examination, (because we are dull and ignorant in matters that concern our Salvation, and also have, and do often offend both God and our neighbours; all which are hindrances to the due performance of this duty) we must examine our selves in those particulars, which concern both our information in matters which we should understand, and our reconciliation with those, whom we have offended.

That which concerns our
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information, is a good and wholesome knowledge of those things which God hath revealed unto us; which is so necessary, that it is the very ground of all our service to God: for how can we do the will of God aright, if we know it not? *Surely that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good, saith Solomon, Prov. 16. 2. and therefore, God will have all men to come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 26. without which, we can reap no comfort unto our selves in any thing that we do, but are as dead men: for this (and this only) is life eternal, that we know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, Joh. 17. 3. So that without it there is no life: and hence*

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it is that the Lord himself complains, *Hosea 4. 6.* *My people are perished for lack of knowledge*: and hence it comes to pass, that many receive this Sacrament without any benefit unto themselves, because they are not able to discern of it aright. We should therefore all our life long carefully exercise our selves in the Word of God, that so when we shall come to examine our selves concerning our knowledge, we may the more easily, and with the greater comfort, try our fitness in this respect; whether we have attained to a competent measure of knowledge in the grounds of Religion or not. Which that we may the better do, we are to make

make tryal of a twofold
Knowledge, which we ought
to have: The one concerning
God, the other concerning
Man.

Concerning God, we are
to know, That there is but
one, only wise and true God,
subsisting in three Persons;
the Father begetting the
Son; the Son begotten of the
Father; and the Holy Ghost
proceeding from both: which
is a Mystery far exceeding
our understanding: yet so far
are we to know and believe
it, as God hath revealed it in
his word: and therefore first
we are to examine our selves
concerning this knowledge.

Concerning man we are to
know that he was first crea-
ted in uprightness, *according*

to the image of God, Gen. i. 17. but afterwards fell through disobedience, and was again recovered by the meritorious death of Christ Jesus. This we are to examine according to the two parts of the Word of God, the Law, and the Gospel.

In the first we shall plainly see what we are in our selves, even wretched and miserable sinners, corrupt children of disobedient parents, and that we have justly deserved death as a due reward for our manifold sins, both original and actual, being *carnal, sold under sin, by nature the children of wrath,* Ephesi 2, 3.

In the second, we shall understand that we are in Christ,

Christ, and what that Covenant is, which God hath made unto man in him, for the pardoning of their sins, which return unto him by repentance, and apply the same unto themselves by Faith. So that here we are to know two things: 1. The means of our redemption and reconciliation, the Death of Christ: *whom God in love sent into the world, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, Coloss. 4. 5. and so hath delivered us from the power of darkness, Coloss. 1. 13.*

2. The means whereby we may apply this unto our selves: namely Faith, which is a gift of God, begotten and increased by hearing the Word,
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and receiving the Sacrament. Let us therefore seriously examine our selves, whether we have learned out of the Word of God our first innocency, which we had by Creation; our misery, which we fell into by Transgression; and the happiness, which we have obtained again by our sweet and blessed Redemption: for in those things ought every one to be instructed, which approacheth unto the Lords Table.

Besides this Knowledge of God and man, we are further to have a particular knowledge of the Sacrament it self: where we are to try, whether we do rightly discern the Elements from the Lords Body, and the true use of them: where-

wherein we must consider, that the Bread and Wine (in themselves ordinary) being ordained of Christ, are now become holy; and whereas Christ blessed this Sacrament at the first institution, we are to know that it is a blessed Sacrament: because whatsoever he blessed, is blessed, and that it will be a means of great blessing unto us, if rightly received: and whereas Christ gave the same after Supper, we must further know that it was not ordained to satisfy our bodily hunger; for, if *any man* thus hunger, St. Paul tells him that he must *eat at home*, 1 Cor. II. 34. but it was given for the refreshing of wearied Souls, by the commemoration of Christ's death for us, and of our communion with

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him:

him: but of this particular Knowledge of the Sacrament, more in the beginning of the first Chapter. In this, as in the former, we must diligently try and examine our selves, for, except we know all these things, we are not to partake at the Lords Table: because without it, whatsoever we do, is but blind devotion.

CHAP. VII.

*The Examination of our
Repentance.*

THUS of our Information in matters which we ought to know. As for our Reconciliation, we are to examine our selves in those things which

which concern either God or ours Neighbours, because we have, and do often offend both.

Those which concern God are principally two. 1. Repentance, whereby we testify our hearty sorrow for offending him, with a desire of amendment. 2. Faith, whereby we take hold on his mercy, for the pardon and forgiveness of them.

First, We are to try whether we have attained to a competent measure of Repentance. And indeed, if we truly look into our selves, and consider that we must one day give an account for every idle word, we shall find matter enough for Repentance, if our heart be not

hardened in sin. Now that it is necessary to examine our selves herein, appears from this, because without it we have no ground at all for any comfort in Christ Jesus : for he, which is stult with his sin, is no more fit to receive Christ, than a glutted stomach its meat : and again, *unto them that are defiled there is nothing pure.* Tit. 1. 15. that is, if through unbelief, they remain in their pollutions ; but *unto the pure all things are pure ; and if we cleanse our hands , and purifie our hearts, and so draw nigh unto God, he will draw nigh unto us,* Jam. 4. 8. *as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them,* Gal. 6. 16. Let us then search and try our ways,
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and turn unto the Lord, Lament. 3. 4. and put on David's resolution, before we come to the Lord's Table: I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thy altar, Psal. 26. 6. In this examination of our Repentance we must have respect both unto the time past and to come.

In respect of the time past we are to perform three duties.

I. Carefully search our hearts to find out our own corruptions; that knowing them, we may the better avoid them, which is most necessary to be done, and that in the first place, because it is impossible that he should seek to go into the right
D 3 way,

way, which doth not first see his errour: and thus much we must know, that he that will not set his sins before him here, to his conversion, shall have them set before him hereafter, to his confusion, if we will needs cover and hide sins, let us in Love and Charity cover the sins of others, for *love covereth a multitude of sin*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. that is, layeth them not open before men to their disgrace, who have committed them: as many do, who delight to hear other mens faults ript up to the quick, but cannot endure to hear of their own: we should not so much exclaim against others mens sins, but rather be humbled for our own, and lay them fully

fully open before our selves, that so we may come to a more serious repentance for them. Which, I think, we cannot but do, (except we have more then stony hearts) when we consider the torments which Christ suffered for our sins; and see our own misery that we are in our selves: for this must needs drive us unto God, as a desperate Disease unto the Physician; and make us utterly to accuse our selves, and say, Psalm 51. 3. *I acknowledge my fault, and my sin is ever before me.*

Now the chiefeft means, which we can use to come to the knowledge of our sins, are these two. 1. A conti-

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nual meditation in the Word of God; wherein (as in a glass) we shall plainly see all our deformities. 2. A reasonable conference and conversation with such as are themselves touched with their sins, both which are excellent means: and therefore we ought sincerely to love the Word of God, because it doth discover our sins unto us; and diligently read, and exercise our selves in it, that so we may come to a full knowledge of it, and also heartily affect and love those whom we see to be thus affected. When we have thus considered, that we ought, and how we may discover our sins, let us examine our selves whether we have
thus

thus done in our life past or no, giving thanks to GOD that he hath at any time discovered such or such sins unto us: if we find that we have not thus done (as God knows, we are all too slack herein) let us seasonably repent us of this neglect, and be sorry that we have no sooner repented; desiring God, that he will be pleased ever more and more to discover our sins unto us, that so we may the better forsake them, and serve him as we ought. Having thus unfolded our sins before our eyes, let us in the second place examine, how in sorrow, we have humbled our selves to God for them; for this is that, even our sorrow, which

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must move God to compassion: and we know that God *is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit.*

Psalms 34. 18. And therefore David being pressed down with the burthen of his sins, comforted himself in this saying: The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise, Psalm 51. 17.

Whereas on the contrary, if we have no true sorrow, if our souls be not wounded within us for our sins, we cannot expect that either we, or our Prayers should be accepted of God: or, that we shall with the Sacrament receive any comfort to our souls, if we come not to it with sor-

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row for our former transgressions.

Now there is a twofold sorrow. 1. Servile, when we are sorry for our sins (as some servants are when they have offended their Masters) not because we have sinned against such a Master, but because we have thereby made our selves subject to the punishment due unto our offence: this is not that sorrow which God expecteth of us: for it rather driveth us to despair, than to any pious Meditations. 2. Filial, when (like natural Children) we grieve for our sins, not so much in respect of the punishment due unto us, as that we have sinned against so merciful and loving a Father.

ther. This is that true sorrow, with which we ought to be affected: which we may obtain two ways. First, by our selves. Secondly, by the help of others also.

By our selves, and so by the consideration especially of two things. First, who it is that we have offended: even God himself, who in tender mercy towards us, gave his only begotten Son to dye for our sins. The consideration of which cannot but work in us a true sorrow, that we should offend so merciful a God: for what son is there (if he have in him the affection of a son) but would grieve that he should offend a Father, which hath been ever loving and kind unto him?

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2. The grievousness of our sins which we have committed; which will plainly appear, if we consider them either in respect of our selves, how deadly they wound the Conscience; or with reference to others, how infectious they have been to them, whom we have often drawn into the same faults, which we our selves have committed; and so have made them guilty of our sins, and our selves of theirs.

The next means to attain this sorrow, is the help of other men, who are themselves touched with a feeling in this kind; with whom we ought to accompany our selves, and patiently to accept of their Admonitions, still account-

counting them our truest Friends, which most faithfully and roundly put us in mind of our faults. The Hypocrite may esteem such as desire thus to express their love, busie-bodies, or the like: but *David's wish was, That the righteous might smite him friendly, and reprove him*, Psal. 141. 5. and whosoever is a sound hearted Christian, will ever strive to make the best use of such, as he can. Let us therefore examine our selves, whether we have made good use of those means or not: If we have not we ought to humble our selves before God for this neglect also; earnestly beseeching him, that he will work in us true sorrow for our sins past, with

with a desire of amendment. Whereunto that we may the better move him, we are in the next place to lay open and confess our sins to God, which is a third thing required in our Repentance. Confession is so necessary, that without it we can expect no pardon at God's hands, but rather some judgment or other; and therefore *Solomon* saith, *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but who so confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy:* and *Saint John* perswadeth us hereunto by the mercies of God, saying, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,* Joh.

L. I, 9.

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Now in our confession we are to observe especially three things. First, what we are to confess. Secondly to whom. Thirdly how.

As for the first, there is a twofold confession. 1. *Laudis*, or of Thankfulness: of which *David* speaks, *Psal. 89. 1. With my mouth will I ever be shewing thy truth; yea every day will I give thanks to thee and praise thy name, Psal. 145. 2.* Which we are also daily to practice according to his example: but this is not that confession which is so properly meant here in the matter of Repentance. There is therefore another, called *confessio fraudis*, a confession of sin; and this we are to make, if we will truly repent: which ought to be,

be, not of some finnes only, but of all, as far as we can call them to mind; and especially of those beloved and bosome sins, to which we are most addicted: which that we may the better do, we ought daily to renew the memory of them in our selves; that so we may be the better able faithfully to confess the same, as often as occasion requires.

2. We are to confess our sins, not unto men or Angels, but unto God, who is the supreme Judge of all. There is indeed a time wherein we may make confession before men, either in publick, before a whole congregation by way of penance, being by the Church there-
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unto commanded; or else in private, and that, either for satisfaction to our neighbour, whom we have wronged, or for consolation, to the Minister, when our consciences are troubled. But that confession, which is a part of our Repentance for our sins past against God, and wherein we desire full pardon for the same, we are to make to God alone: for he it is, who is offended, and he alone that can forgive our sins.

3. Our Confession must not be of the heart only, but of the mouth also; for God who made both, expecteth to be honoured by both; and as both have been unclean before him; so they ought both also to acknowledge the same, that he may cleanse and purifie

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He both them, and with them,
the whole man.

Again, our profession must
proceed from a two-fold
ground. 1. Hatred of sin,
because by it we dishonour
God. 2. Hope of mercy,
which is that we aim at in
our confession; and it must
further be qualified with sin-
cerity, with shame and sor-
row that we have offended
so gracious a God, lest God
reject us as hypocritical. Let
us therefore henceforth leave
off censuring the faults of o-
ther men, and begin to ag-
gravate our own; and espe-
cially before we presume to
come to the Supper of the
Lord, let us take some time
unto our selves wherein we
may be most private, and shut
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our selves up in our Closets,
and there humbly on our
knees lay open before God
those sins which we have
committed in our life past;
and that fully and faithfully,
neither diminishing the num-
ber of them, nor mincing the
hainousness of them, for
God will not be mocked.
These are things which we
are to perform in respect of
the time past: as for the time
to come, we must know, that
he which will truly repent
must not only turn from e-
vil, but also turn unto
good; and therefore, having
confessed our sins past with
sorrow for them, we must (if
we expect pardon) constant-
ly purpose for ever after, by
Gods grace, to amend and
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reform our lives, resolving (as much as in us lieth) to avoid all occasion, which may draw us into the like sins again, and to make better use of those means which God hath afforded us, than we have done heretofore; and that by so much the more, by how much we have offended so gracious a Father. But of this resolution of amendment, more in the XII Chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

*The Examination of
our Faith.*

THE Examination of our Faith, is that whereunto St. Paul exhorteth the *Corinthians,*

thians, saying, *Examine your selves, whether you be in the faith, or not, 2 Cor. 13. 5.* The necessity whereof appeareth even from this, that *without faith we cannot please God in any thing we do, Heb. 11. 26.* much less in this weighty business: yea Faith is so necessary, that without it we do receive nothing at all, when we do receive; for although with our bodily hands we receive the Bread and Wine; yet if we have not Faith, we want a hand to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, and the comfort which thence ariseth unto our souls: for how can we be perswaded in our consciences, that our receiving is acceptable unto God, and that the merits
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of Christ Jesus belong unto us without Faith? It is impossible that we should receive any more comfort than what we believe; and therefore our Saviour Christ saith, *He that believeth on me shall never thirst*, Joh. 6. 35. Therein implying, that he which doth not believe in him, shall ever thirst: yea, which is fearful, *he which believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16.

Now that Faith which is here required of us, must not be only a general faith, whereby we believe that the Word of God is true, and that God is a just Judge; (for this the Devils themselves believe, and tremble at it; and well they may, considering what

what is due to them, eternal condemnation) but we must go on further to a more special kind of Faith, and (which they cannot do) apply the merits of Christ, and the promises of God made therein unto our Souls and Consciences, saying with *Job chap. 19. verse 25. I know that my Redeemer liveth*: I know by the knowledge of Faith, or I believe; and not only the Redeemer of Man, but my Redeemer liveth.

Of which that we may the more fully perswade our selves, we must believe; first, concerning our selves, that we are not able of our selves to do any thing that is acceptable and pleasing in the sight of God; *For we have nothing but*

but what we have received of God, as St. Paul testifieth, whether good gift, or ability of doing good.

2. Concerning the means of our Salvation, we must believe, that the merits of Christs death and passion, are alone sufficient for our Redemption, without any merits at all, or satisfaction of ours.

3. Concerning God, we ought to believe, that if we truly repent us of our life past, constantly purposing to lead a new life hereafter, and sincerely use those good means which he shall afford us, he will then be merciful unto us in accepting our endeavors, through the merits of Christ Jesus.

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4. Concerning the Sacrament, we ought to believe, that it is a means ordained of God, to exhibit unto us Christ Jesus with his merits, and a seal to confirm our Faith. If, upon consideration of these particulars, we can be thus perswaded of our own insufficiency and unworthiness, and that yet notwithstanding upon our sincere humiliation, and obedience, God will be merciful unto us; if we cannot only say in general that God is a merciful Father, and that Christ died for the redemption of man; but every one of us in particular thus apply unto himself: I believe that God is my merciful Father, and Christ Jesus died to redeem
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deem me as well as any other; all which I shall have plainly confirmed unto me in the receiving of this Sacrament, wherein (I trust) God will in mercy accept me for Christ's merits, though to my self I be unworthy: if (I say) we can find that we are not hypocritically, but sincerely, not verbally, but heartily, thus perswaded; then may we, having thus made peace with God by our Faith and Repentance, boldly approach unto the Lord's Table.

CHAP. IX.

*The Examination of our
Charity.*

HAVING examined our selves in those former duties towards God, we are to go on to another duty, which concerneth our neighbour, namely, Charity: which is a free forgiving those that have offended us, with a testification of the same, when occasion is offered: and reconciliation of our selves to those, whom we also our selves have wronged.

That we may be the better perswaded unto a due performance of this duty, we are to observe two things.

1. The motives hereunto;

2. The

2. The manner how it ought to be done.

The motives, which invite us to the necessity of it, are drawn from the consideration of these four things.

1. What we our selves have done unto others.

2. What harm we do unto our selves by not being in charity.

3. What they are, with whom we are offended.

4. Whence such wrongs as we receive, do primarily come.

As for the First, we are conscious unto our selves of a twofold offence which we have committed.

1. Against other men, whom perhaps we have at some time or other more

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wronged, than they us, or at least our consciences can tell us, that we have been prone and ready thereunto, had we not been prevented: and how can he which hath been forward to wrong others, make the most of every wrong offered by others unto himself? We must here take notice of the advice of *Solomon* in another case: *Seek not* (saith he) *to have thy servant curse thee; for oftentimes thy heart knoweth, that thou thy self hath also cursed others.* Ecclesiast. 7. 22. So also be not hasty to aggravate the wrong which others have done unto thee; for thy heart can tell thee, that thou thy self hast also wronged others.

2. If this consideration prevail not with us, let us consider in the next place, that we have daily offended God far more than any man can offend us: and can any of us expect any mercy from God in the forgiveness of our debts, if we shew none to others in passing by small matters of offence? Small, I say, because the greatest are small in respect of the offences which we have committed against God. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples plainly, (and in them us) Mark 11. 25. *If ye do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses:* which was verified in the Parable of the cruel servant;

who (because he had no compassion on his fellow-servant, as his Lord had pity on him) was *delivered to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due*; with this application annexed, *so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother their trespasses*, Mar. 18. 34, 35. The consideration whereof, I think, is able to move any good-hearted Christian to love his brethren, though they have offended him.

The second motive unto this duty is taken from the consideration of the harm, that otherwise we bring upon our own souls; which indeed is greater, than either we can do unto others, or they unto us.

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This harm is twofold;

1. General; namely, a stain to all the good which we have: for *though we spake with the tongue of men and angels, though we have all other good gifts, as of Propheſying, underſtanding of myſteries, &c. yet if we have not Charity, we are nothing,* 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2. Let us not therefore boaſt of our learning and other good parts, as long as we are without Charity; for all is nothing; *no more than a ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal.*

2. Particular: and ſo it is an hinderance. 1. To our Prayers. 2. To the right receiving of the Sacrament. The want of Charity is an hinderance to our Prayers in a twofold reſpect.

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1. Because, without Charity, we cannot expect to receive that which we pray for; for if we pray to God to forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us, how shall we hope that God will forgive us, if we forgive not others, which is the condition of our Prayers? To pray for the one, and not to perform the other, is to mock God in our Prayers; or rather, miserably to deceive our selves: for as many have not because they ask not, so many *work and receive not, because they ask amiss*: Jam. 4. 3. and such are they which ask without Charity: and who knows how soon they may stand in need of God's mercy?

2. It hinders our Prayers in this respect; because without Charity, we cannot join those, with whom we are at variance with our selves in our Prayers: which is against the rule of our Saviour Christ, who biddeth us to pray, *Our Father*, and give us *our Bread*; and so joyn others with our selves in every Petition: now how can we heartily pray thus for them, whom we love not? Our own Consciences can sufficiently tell us, that we cannot; yea, and that we often have been faulty herein. Wherefore, if we desire that our Prayers should henceforth be effectual, let us follow the counsel which Saint *Peter* giveth to the Husband
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and Wife, 1 Pet. 3. 7. Which is, to live together according to knowledge, bearing one with another, that our prayers be not hindered: which if we do, our prayers shall be much furthered, as Christ himself saith: *If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching the thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is Heaven,* Mat. 18, 19.

The want of Charity is an hinderance to our due receiving of the Sacrament: because the Sacrament is a Seal of our union and communion, as with Christ, so amongst our selves; as Saint Paul saith, 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The bread*

bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many are one Bread and one Body, because we partake of one Bread: So that, unless we be joined together in love, we cannot be capable of those benefits, which otherwise would arise unto our souls.

Again, Love is the very badge whereby we are known to be Christs Disciples, *Joh. 13. 35. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.* It is a part of that wedding-garment, wherewith every one ought to be cloathed, that comes to the Lords Table. Wherefore, if we desire to be accepted when we do come, and there to receive the

the benefits of Christs Death and Passion, let us put on the bowels of mercy and compassion.

A Third Motive unto this duty is taken from the consideration of the parties, with whom we are offended: they are Men, yea Christians as well as our selves; such for whom Christ died as well as for us. Shall we then think it hard to suffer some small wrong at their hands, for whom Christ thought it not too much to die? Can we persuade our selves, that there is the love of God in us, if we hate them whom he so loved? *every one which loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him, 1. Joh. 5. 1. and whosoever loveth him*

him that did redeem, loveth him also that is redeemed by him.

The fourth Motive unto this duty of Charity is taken from a serious consideration of the first original, whence these wrongs proceed which we receive.

And here we may take notice both of the Author, and also of the Disposer thereof. The first Author is not so much the party from whom we receive the wrong, as the grand enemy of both us and them, the Devil, who well knoweth, that *a house divided against it self cannot stand*: and therefore striveth by all means to set us at variance amongst our selves, though sometimes upon small occasions;

sions; that so thereby hindering us from the performance of good duties, (as the receiving of the Sacrament, and such like) which are the means of our Salvation, he may the more easily tempt us to worse imployment, while others are better exercised, and so make his side the stronger against us: and who knows what power it may please God to give him against us at such times? Wherefore, as we love our own safety, let us seek to cross him, who thus opposeth us by his temptations: and if we will needs be at strife, let it be with him, who will never be at quiet with us, until he have gotten the upper hand of us: which we
may

may the more easily persuade our selves unto; if we have respect not so much to other mens wrongful actions, as to his wicked suggestions, the cause of all, and assure our selves, that, in putting up a wrong, we right our selves, and cross him; which should be our chiefest aim.

Again, as the Devil is the Author of our wrongs: so God, who is the Disposer of all things, hath a hand in it, who permitted the Devil thus far to provoke us: perhaps for the tryal of our constancy and patience, or for some other ends best known unto himself: and, if we could but see, that the finger of God is in our Crosses, we would

would patiently answer with David, Psalm 39. 10. *I will become dumb, and open not my mouth because it is thy doing; and so commit our cause to him that he might make our righteousness clear,* Psalm 36. 7.

These are the chiefest Motives to perswade us to this duty of Love and Charity: to all which we may add another, taken from the exceeding love of God to us, *who so loved us, without any love received first from us, that he sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins,* 1. John 4. 10. Whence the Apostle gathereth this powerful consequence: *If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,* verse 12. Which that we
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may the better do, let us in the next place see the manner how it ought to be performed.

Here we are to have respect both to the time past, and also to come.

As for the time past; either we have wronged others, or they us. If we have wronged others, we ought to perform two things.

I. Undo that which we have done, by making restitution as far as in us lies: according to the example of *Zacheus*, Luke 19. 8. who was willing to *restore fourfold whatsoever he had taken from any man by false accusation*: such ought we to be, ready to make good whatsoever we have taken from any man, and to
give

give satisfaction for any wrong that we have done. Neither is it sufficient to be willing thus to make satisfaction, when we are moved thereunto; but we must also in the second place, seek peace with those whom we have wronged, though we be not asked: which is the counsel of Christ himself, Mat. 5. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother: he saith not stay till he come to thee; to be reconciled when he cometh, but go thou to him. And so David also adviseth us, Psalm 34. 14. Seek peace and ensue it: stay not till it be*

be

be offered to, or required of thee, but seek it. But perhaps those (whom we have offended) are far off, and we cannot come near them; or near, and will not be reconciled to us, what shall we do in this case? Here we ought to use all means that we can, for the procuring of peace and quietness: but if either occasion or acceptance be denied us, we must not doubt, but that God will be pleased to accept of our desire.

Now, if others have wronged us, we must (though perhaps it may seem somewhat hard) freely forgive them; loving even them that hate us, whereunto our Saviour Christ admonished us in every

every Gospel ; saying, *If thy brother trespass against thee seven times a day, thou shalt forgive him*, Luk. 17. 4. And again, *I say unto you, love your enemies ; bless them that curse you*, Mat. 5. 44. But some one may say, such an one hath wronged me so much, that flesh and blood cannot take it. It is true, if thou consult with flesh and blood, it will seem hard to bear the least wrong : but flesh is not a Friend whom we may safely consult, but rather a bosome enemy, whom we ought to resist, if we ask counsel of CHRIST (whose counsel we ought, and may most safely follow) he will bid us go and be reconciled, and Saint Paul bids us to feed
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our enemies, and to overcome evil with good, Rom. 11, 12. and Solomon can tell us, that it is the glory of a man to pass over a transgression, Prov. 19. 11.

As for revenge, it is not for us to meddle with it; because the Lord himself saith, Deut. 32. 35. *To me belongeth vengeance and recompence:* and St.

James will assure us that to have bitter envying, and strife in the heart, is wisdom which descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish: but that wisdom which is from above, is easy to be entreated, and full of mercy, James 3. 17.

Wherefore let us grieve at such wrathful motions, assuring our selves that it is a point of heavenly wisdom to forbear; and certainly, if we
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can but once find that God hath wrought in us a readiness to forgive those which have wronged us, and to pray for their conversion, we may esteem it an evident sign of Sanctification.

As for the time to come, that we may the better preserve the bond of Charity, we must resolve carefully to observe these two sorts of Rules. 1. How we may keep peace with others. 2. How others may do the like with us.

As for the first, because others may outwardly wrong us either in word or deed, that we may in both avoid discontent and strife thereupon, we must promise unto our selves a twofold Rule.

1. Con-

1. Concerning their words ;
 which is the Rule in *Solomon*,
Prov. 7. 21. namely, *That we*
take no heed to all words that
are spoken : for this is that,
 which often stirreth up strife
 amongst us, which otherwise
 might easily, and without
 any prejudice be avoided, if
 men were not too inquisitive
 and ready to take notice of
 every thing that is spoken :
 and therefore we should here
 not entertain, but sleight,
 yea reject such men, who un-
 der pretence of love unto us,
 will whisper in our ears, and
 maliciously informe us, a-
 gainst such or such an one
 whom *Solomon* calleth *pick-*
thanks, whisperers, tale-bear-
ers, such as will separate chief
friends. *Prov. 16. 28.* for oc-
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caſion of ſeparation may be given (if ſo taken) between friends : as we often ſee that he, which is ſingularly affected to another, may haſtily ſpeak ſome reproachful words of him ; which perhaps he will preſently be ſorry for, and not ſpeak the like again : yet this ſhall be enough for the breach of Charity, if it be in the audience of a whiſperer : who (to ſpeak the truth) is a meer incendiary , that will ever be adding fuel to the fire of contention. Whence Saint James calls the tongue, *a fire, a world of iniquity, that ſetteth on fire the whole courſe of Nature*, James 3. 6. And Solomon ſaith, *that without wood the fire is quenched ; and without*

out

out a tale-bearer Strife ceaseth,
Prov. 26. 20.

The Second rule, whereby we may keep peace with others, is concerning other mens actions: which is that we so take them (though sometimes wrongful) that we be not easily provoked thereby, for an hasty and furious discontent upon some small occasion, doth often break out to the breach of Charity; whereas a seasonable deliberation would mitigate the matter, and so cover all in silence. And therefore St. Paul telleth us, that *Charity suffereth long, and is not easily provoked.* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. If we can but make true use of these two Rules, we may easily, for our parts, live

at peace with others. Secondly, we must endeavour that others also by our carriage may do the like with us: to which purpose we must take away, first, a common fault amongst us, which is a main cause of strife and enmity. 2. The occasion thereof.

The fault it self is railing, scandalous and reproachful speaking: which is so frequent, that few or none (if we look narrowly into our words) but are conscious unto themselves hereof; but also heinous in it self, that Saint *Paul* ranketh it with robbery and extortion, *1 Cor. 6. 10.* saying, *that neither thieves, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God;* and so pernicious also unto the
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the sweet society of men; that it is that breath, which often blows the coals of contention so far, that they cannot be quenched again without blood: and daily experience teacheth us, that there is no such common cause of strife and debate, as scandalous terms, which are so often heard amongst us; so that, if we can but avoid these, we shall take away the very ground, upon which our wrongful actions are builded; and therefore Saint James, beseeching us by the name of Brethren, exhorteth us *not to speak evil one of another, Jam. 4. 11.* and Saint Peter's advice is, *that we lay aside all evil speaking, and as new born babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word.* 1 Pet. 2. 1. Now

Now, that our speech of others may be such as it ought to be, let us follow the advice of *Solomon*, whose counsel is that *it be friendly*: Prov. 18.24. *A man that hath friends ought to shew himself friendly*: not uttering any thing that may tend to their disgrace; lest by such discourtesies, he loose their good likeing, but rather endeavour by fair, and courteous speeches, to knit their hearts faster, unto him.

Neither yet can we easily avoid this fault unless in the second place, we take away the occasion of it; which is a tickling desire, that most men are affected with, to hear the faults of other men (though perhaps less than their own)
laid

laid open and spoken against : which quickly begetteth a suspicion of their worth, and hereupon we too too readily build some calumnious report or other. If it shall therefore happen at any time, that we hear the slips and errors of another, let us not be delighted therein, but rather seek to cover them; for *he that covereth a fault seeketh love*, Prov. 17. 9. and not he which desireth to have them laid open. This is that which we ought to do, both for the restoring and preserving of Charity; wherein we must necessarily examine ourselves before we come to partake with others at the Lords Table. If upon examination we find any thing wanting,

either that we are not in charity with others, or others with us; let us according to these rules, seek by all means to make good what is wanting, and so come.

CHAP. X.

Of Premeditation, and Prayer.

THUS of the first thing to be perform'd in our preparation, namely Examination of our own fitness to receive. The second is the Premeditation of the benefits, which^r we are to receive: which we must not omit, that we may the better be stirred up to seek God, and to communicate at his Table with joy.

joy and gladness; for there is nothing which makes us more cold and backward in such duties, than this, that we have not sufficiently tasted how good the Lord is to those that seek him; the consideration whereof is alone able to move any man to a longing desire after him. Wherefore, having searched into our own estate by a second examination, lest we should yet fall back to a lukewarm carelessness of what we are to do, (to which the Devil will be ever ready to tempt us) and so become the more unfit to communicate at the Lords table, either to Gods glory or our own comfort, let us ever quicken our devotion with a seasonable

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premeditation before we come to the benefits which we are to receive by coming. All which are comprehended in this one word, Life, which we receive in the Lords Supper, by receiving Christ, who is *Life it self*, John 14. 6.

Now the life of a Christian is either the life of Grace here, or of Glory hereafter.

The life of Grace (which we obtain in this Supper) consists of two things.

1. A happy freedom from a twofold evil ; first, of sin ; from which we are freed by the death of Christ : whose blood (if we rely on him) will make our sins (though as red as Scarlet) to become as white as wool.

2. Of

2. Of punishment; from which Christ hath redeemed us by the shedding of his blood; so that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. where we may boldly say, *Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died: yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, making intercession for us*, Verse 34.

The second thing is a comfortable enjoyment of a three-fold good.

1. An inseparable union both with Christ our Head, *from whom nothing shall be able to separate us*, Rom. 8. 38. as also with our brethren and fellow-members in Love and Charity; which David accounted *A good and pleasant*

fant thing, Psal. 133. 1.

2. A blessed strengthening of our Faith, whereof this Sacrament is a sure seal (as before) whence it shall come to pass, that we shall be able to resist the temptations of the Devil, (who striveth by all means to make shipwrack of our Faith and us) and reply with *David, Psal. 16. 9. I have set God always before me, for he is on my right hand, therefore shall I not fall:* this is that which will make our hearts glad, and our flesh rest in hope : as it is *Verse 10.* which bringeth in a third good, and that not the least, that God vouchsafeth to his people in this world, namely, Peace of Conscience.

This is that which we are
most

most carefully to seek after, and which in the latter end, will be more worth unto us, than ten thousand worlds of pleasure which we can enjoy: and therefore *David's* counsel is, *Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last,* Psal. 37.

38. Now wherein can we better keep innocency, than by being carefully and faithfully exercised in Gods service? And what greater comfort of heart, and what greater peace of conscience can rebound to a poor sinful soul, than the full assurance of the forgiveness of his sins, and his inseparable union with Christ Jesus? which we receive, if we receive aright,

aright, by receiving this Sacrament. This is that, besides which there is nothing in us which shall be able to strengthen and comfort us against our Enemy the Devil, in the day of our departure hence; who will then be sure to affright us with the ugliness of our sins (though now in policy he cover them) that so he may, if it be possible, drive us to despair of Gods mercy towards us: then (I say) by the help of a good conscience, as *Samuel* resolutely spake unto the *Israelites*, 1 Sam. 22. 3. saying, *Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed; whose Ox have I taken? whom have I defrauded? and I will restore it you:*

you: so shall we be able to non-plus our calumniating enemy, and say, Behold, Satan, here I am, witness against me before the Lord: wherein have I done those evil things which I should not have done? wherein have I omitted those good duties which I should have done? when did I at any time despair of Gods mercy, or neglect the same? when did I prophane, or abuse his holy Sabbath? When did I contemn or neglect his Word and Sacrament? here I am; witness against me: but my conscience tells me to my comfort, that I have diligently, according to my power, performed what I ought, and therefore thou hast no part in
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me. If we can thus clear our selves, then shall we be able to say with *S. Paul, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. The time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:* and that which followeth hereupon, is *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* This Crown is that benefit, which we shall receive, after this life of grace is ended, in the life of glory. In the mean time, while we live here, we shall receive, though not this Crown actually, yet the full assurance thereof, believing with *S. Paul, That it is laid up for us, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give us at the last day.*

These are the benefits
which

which every true Communicant receiveth at the Lord's Table: wherefore (as we desire to receive these Benefits, which pass all understanding) let us carefully meditate thereon, that we may be inflamed with the desire of them.

But because all that we can do, is nothing without Gods Blessing, we are in the next place to pray to God, that he will be pleased to bless our endeavours, and to accept us in his Son, which is the third duty required of us in our preparation: without the due performance of which, though otherwise we have diligently prepared ourselves, we cannot expect to receive any comfort of soul,
with

with the Bread and Wine, because God only giveth that unto us, and he is debter unto no man: let us therefore seek unto him by Prayer for a Blessing, who is the giver of all Blessings. This we ought to do first in private, setting aside some convenient times, wherein we may freely betake our selves to this duty: but especially in the morning when we are to receive, we should rise early, and consider what we are to do that day, namely, sit at the Lords Table, and therefore be sure that we consecrate our selves to God by Prayer and good Meditations. Secondly, in publick with the Congregation, where we ought to present our selves at the very beginning.

ginning, that so we may joyn together in all things which we are to perform, and there, at our first entrance, pour forth unto God (as at all other times) this, or the like Prayer.

O Lord, strengthen me against the temptations of Satan, who strives to draw away my heart from thee; and accept the prayers which I shall now make unto thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Which done, joyn with the Congregation, in such Prayers as are then used.

In both we are carefully to consider two things.

I. For whom we ought to Pray; and that is, not for our selves only, but others also, according to the Counsel of S.

S. James, chap. 4. v. 16. Pray one for another, which we learn from the pattern of Prayer; the Lords Prayer, left unto us by Christ himself.

2. How we ought to pray, and that is, first in Humility, with a feeling of our own wants, for which the poor Publican was *rather justified* than the proud Pharisee for his vain boasting, *Luke 11. 14.* Secondly, in a settled and fervent devotion: when we pray, our minds ought not to be fixed on any thing else, (as many, God knows, are) for God will have the whole heart, or none. 3. In Faith; with confidence that we shall receive what we ask; *for he which wavereth, that is, not believeth, Let not that*

that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord, James i. 7. If we be deficient in any one of these conditions, we ask amiss, and so shall receive accordingly. Wherefore, as we desire to receive benefit, and comfort by the Lords Supper, Let us seek unto God for it: and as we hope to have our Prayers heard, let us pray both for our selves and others in true humility, fervency, and devotion, and assured hope of obtaining.

C H A P. XI.

*Of Meditation at the
Lords Table.*

HAVING thus fitted our
selves by examination of
our

our estate, premeditation of the benefits, and prayer for a blessing, we may assure our selves that we have prepared our selves for the receiving of the Holy Communion (though by reason of our weakness, not in that measure) yet in that right manner as we ought : and so have performed the first duty required of us, namely, diligent preparation ; whereupon we may boldly and chearfully (otherwise not) present our selves unto the Lords Table : where we are to be exercised in a second duty, namely, a seasonable Meditation.

This Meditation must be threefold. 1. Before. 2 In the time of the Consecration.
3. Af-

3. After the same, or, in the time of Receiving.

Before the Consecration, when the Minister is going towards the Table, Meditate on these two things. 1. Seeing the Table spread, and the Elements set thereon, we are to consider, what place we are come unto; namely, the Table of the great King of Heaven and Earth: and that therefore we ought most carefully and reverently, to behave our selves, both in body, by a reverend and seemly gesture: and also in mind, laying aside all earthly cogitations whatsoever, and that in a twofold respect, 1. Because the place it self is holy, and therefore ought not to be profaned by any un-

unseemly behaviour, for these must be laid aside, as God commanded, *Exod. 3. 5.* *Put off thy shooes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground.* 2. Because as the place is holy, so also God himself is there amongst us, as he saith, *Matth. 18. 20.* *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* He is in the midst of us, beholding not only our outward gesture, but our very hearts and affections; and ready both to reward those that honour him by reverencing, and to punish all such as dishonour him by profaning and abusing his holy ordinance: which we shall do, if our carriage be not with fear and reverence.

2. When

2. When we hear the Minister say, *Draw near, and take this Sacrament*, we must consider, that God by his Minister freely inviteth us to his Table: then let every one lift up his heart by this or the like ejaculation.

Lord, I am not worthy, by reason of my sins, to approach before thee; but seeing it hath pleased thee in mercy to call me, behold, in humility and obedience I come.

Then joyn in Prayer with the Minister. In the time of the Consecration we ought seriously to settle our minds on the Elements, and the Actions about them, for the better stirring up our devotion: and so meditate thus, 1. When we hear the Minister read

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the Words of Christs Institution, and see him take the Bread and Wine, we ought joyfully and thankfully to meditate on the great love of God, in setting apart his Son for the redemption of us his enemies, in the taking of these Elements, and setting them apart to be distributed unto us, as seals and pledges of the same: joyfully (I say) in respect of the benefit which doth thereby come unto us, and thankfully in respect of Gods love, which is greater than all the hearts of men joyn'd in one, are able to express.

3. When we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, we ought to be exercised in a twofold Meditation.

1. Of comfort; considering
that

that the Bread is broken, and the Wine is poured out, not only to be the more visible to the Communicants, but chiefly to represent unto us the crucifying of Christs Body, and the shedding of his Blood for our sins: for *he was broken for our iniquities*, Isaiah 53. 5. By which is not meant that any bone of him was broken, but that he was crucified: whence we should every one of us gather this comfort, saying to our souls: *Christ Jesus was broken on the Cross, and suffered an accursed death for me, by whose merits I trust, I shall escape the curse of that death, which is due for my sins unto me.* And here by the way we may take notice how the *Papists* do err in deliver-

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ing

ing whole Cakes unto the Communicants, which represents Christ whole, not crucified, and so affords the less comfort.

2. Of sorrow, and that for our sins; the grievousness of which was such that they could not be satisfied for, without the precious blood of *Christ Jesus*: these were the spears that pierced him to the soul; that was that which drew his precious Blood from his side: and the consideration of this should breed in us a hearty sorrow, that we, so vile wretches as we are, should thus wound so loving a Redeemer: and certainly if we do not grieve for those sins, for which he hath so much smarted, we may justly fear that the
stupid

stupid Earth, the hard Rock, and the dark Graves, which trembled, rent, and opened at his death, shall one day rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us. When therefore we see the Bread broken, &c. let every one thus meditate: *O vile wretch that I am, that I by my sin, should thus wound my merciful and loving Redeemer.*

After the Consecration, when the Minister is receiving himself (considering that we are in the presence of God, who seeth our very hearts) we should pour out our souls unto him in this or the like soliloquy.

O sweet Jesu, I do humbly acknowledge with the Centurion, that I am not worthy that thou
G 3 *shoul-*

shouldest enter under my roof,
much less to come and sup and
dwell with me: but seeing it is
thy good pleasure to vouchsafe
me this favour, cleanse me I be-
seech thee from my sins, that I
may entertain thee in a pure and
sanctified heart; strengthen my
faith that I may fully rely on thy
mercy, comfort me with thy bles-
sed Spirit, and so dwell with me
for ever. Grant this, O blessed
Redeemer, for thy mercies sake.
Amen.

Again, before we receive;
when the Minister is coming
to distribute, and offers the
Elements unto us (consider-
ing that Christ with all his
benefits are offered unto us by
God, as well as the Elements
by the Minister) let every one
meditate thus with himself:

Christ

Christ with the benefits of his death doth now come to sanctifie and comfort my sinful soul, in full assurance whereof I am to receive these signs and seals at the hands of his Minister: And fo as he stretcheth out his hands to receive these, let him lift up his soul in Faith, with this or the like ejaculation, Come Lord Jesus unto thy humble servant, as my trust is thou wilt. This we are to do after the Consecration, before we receive.

After this in the Act of receiving, we are to perform these two things.

1. While we eat the Bread, meditate every one thus.

Blessed Jesu, I do heartily believe that thou wast crucified on the Cross, and that for me

as well as for any other, and, as I now have received this Bread broken, whereby my body shall be nourished: so I believe that I have also received spiritually thy Body crucified with all the benefits thereof, the full pardon of all my sins; and the strengthening and refreshing of my sinful Soul: this I believe, Lord help my unbelief for thy mercies sake. Amen.

2. When we take the Wine, and while we feel it in our stomach, we should thus meditate.

Most blessed Redeemer, I do truly believe that thy Blood was shed out of thy Body as verily as I have received this Wine apart from the Bread, and that for the remission of my sins, as well as any others: and I do
also

also believe that with this Wine, I have received thy precious Blood, whereby my sins are fully washed away, and my Soul purified: and that according to thy promise, I shall never hunger nor thirst any more, because with this Bread and Wine I have received thy Flesh, which is meat indeed, and thy Blood, which is drink indeed; with which I humbly pray thee to cherish and nourish my poor Soul, and to increase in me hearty love to these my fellow members, who have now participated with me, that so we may serve thee as we ought, and that nothing may be able to separate us from thy love, which I humbly beseech thee to grant for thy mercies sake. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Of Practice.

THis is that whereon we ought to meditate in the time of receiving: which being duly performed, we ought in the next place to take notice of a religious Practice of those things, which are to be observed afterwards in our life and conversation.

These things may be reduced to two Heads; namely, such as we are to do. 1. In the Church. 2. At home.

In the Church we must perform two duties.

1. Having ended the former Meditations, we ought each man in particular to give thanks unto God for his

his mercy, in this or the like form.

O Lord, I humbly bless thy holy Name, for that thou in mercy vouchsafed to accept me at this thy Table amongst the rest of thy elect and chosen people, and that thou hast so graciously fed my languishing Soul with the precious body and blood of Christ Jesus. I confess, O Lord, that I am not worthy of the least of thy favours: but seeing it hath pleased thee thus to have mercy upon me; give me grace, I humbly beseech thee, to walk worthy of this thy mercy in reverence of life, to the glory of thy holy Name, and the salvation of my sinful Soul, even for thy mercies sake. Amen.

2. After this, every one ought to joyn with the Congregation.

gregation in Prayer and Thanksgiving, praising God for his goodness, and so depart lovingly together with cheerful hearts, that God hath so graciously entertained us his unworthy servants.

After we are come home, we are further to take notice of two duties.

I. Meditation, meditating seriously what comfort we have received by being at the Lords Table. Upon which consideration, if we find any good motions in our selves, any assurance of the forgiveness of our sins, we ought by all means to cherish the same, by the comfortable remembrance of Christs death and passion for us; and so much the more lift up

up ours thankful hearts unto God for his mercy; as S. Paul sweetly exhorteth the *Colossians*, saying, *As I have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith abounding therein with thanksgiving, Coloss. 2. 6, 7.*

And this is that which *Solomon* maketh a true note of a righteous man, that he will ever be increasing those good gifts which he hath in him: when he saith, *Prov. 4. 18. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto perfect day.*

When therefore we shall find a little faith, a little love in us (as God knows the best of us hath little enough) let us desire to increase it, and to have
our

our corruptions diminished: for these desires are a beginning of Grace, and a sign of a heart well affected; and of this desire we cannot make a better tryal, than by considering whether we long to receive again the next time, that so these good beginnings may be the more perfected.

But if we find not this comfort in us; let us search into our selves, whether there be not some sin in us as yet unrepented of; and whether we came not so well prepared to the Communion as we should; if so, then ought we to humble our selves before God, with sorrow for this our negligence: If we cannot see this in us, but that we came well prepared; then must we patient.

tiently wait the Lords leifure,
and pray earnestly that he will
give us the comfort of his Spi-
rit, with full assurance that he
will grant our requests when
it shall be best for us.

The second duty, wherein
we must be exercised at
home, is a resolution or con-
stant purpose of leading a new
life, whereunto Saint Paul
earnestly inviteth us, *Rom. 6.*
19. saying, *As you have yielded*
your members servants to un-
cleannes and unto iniquity, e-
ven so now yield your members
servants to Righteousness, un-
to Holiness: and why? because
being made free from sin, and
become servants unto God, we
have our fruit (not unto sin,
but) unto godliness, verse 22.
Shall we then be made free
from

from sin, and become the servants of God, and yet return unto sin again? God forbid: if we do so, we receive the grace of God in vain: which Saint Paul beseecheth the Corinthians to take heed of, 2 Cor. 6. 1. now what is it but to receive the Grace of God in vain, when after we have escaped the pollutions of this world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are again intangled therewith; and as the Sow to the mire, return to our former course of life again? S Peter will assure us, that it had been better not to have known the way of righteousness, then after we have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto

unto us, 2 Pet 2. 21. And well were it, if this were duly considered of some, who think it sufficient to live precisely that day, in which they receive (though perhaps can scarce do that) and presently afterwards live as profanely and loosely as ever they did; but we must know that God expects a daily reformation of those, which present themselves at his Table; and, if we do not duly consider of it, we shall one day with fear and trembling acknowledge it: as Saint Paul plainly tells the Hebrews, saying, *If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery*
in-

indignation, Heb. 10. 26, 27.

Now that we may the better lead a new life before God, we must consider, that to the direction of a Christian life, three things are to be known of us.

1. What we are to pray for.

2. What we ought to believe.

3. What we are to do.

The first being rightly known, afford us a perfect direction for our Hope: the second for our Faith, the third for our Piety.

The first we have fully set down in the Lords Prayer, composed by Christ himself as a most exact rule for all our Prayers.

The second in the Creed, which containeth the Articles
of

of our Faith, contained in the Doctrine of the Apostles: called therefore The Apostles Creed,

The third, in the Ten Commandments, written by the finger of God himself, and revealed unto us in his holy Word, to be our Direction both for our holiness towards God, and our charity towards our Neighbours.

These three Rules of our Life (the Lords Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments) are daily repeated of those of the meaner and more simple sort; but yet (God knows) not so well understood as they should be, by divers to whom God hath given a greater measure of knowledge: never did our
Land,

Land, yea almost every house, more freely abound with fruitful and comfortable Expositors upon these Rules, then now they do; yet who looks so far into them, as to know thereby the full extent of any of them? Some few indeed there are (whereof God increase the number) who make a conscionable use of those good means of Salvation: whereas others are well content, yea with delight desire to read (and that upon the best days) vain and idle discourses, which are so far from furthering us in the way of Salvation, as that (like Tares) they choak the Word of God, and hinder the growth thereof, as we too often see by our daily experience.

There

There is indeed a time for all things, for pleasure as well as profit: but shall we spend the best of our time, yea (as some do most miserably) the greatest part of our time in such vanities, and altogether neglect those good helps for our direction; esteeming them too plain and homely, or not pleasant enough for our witty inventions, and acute judgments? Let such know, that they, which thus neglect their own good, are guilty to themselves of a twofold crime.

1. Of unnatural wrong unto their own Souls, in stopping their eyes from beholding the light of Salvation, which otherwise will shine unto them; dealing herein as injuriously with themselves, as *Papists* do
with

with their deceived Laity, training them up in ignorance and blind devotion.

2. Of a twofold ingratitude:

1. Towards those painful Authors, which (like fruitful Lights) have spent themselves for the directing others, whose labours do well deserve to be accepted amongst us: and we shall prove our selves but unthankful Members of the Church wherein we live, if we make not that good use of those Lights, for which they were intended.

Secondly, (which is the greatest) we shew our selves unthankful towards G O D himself, who hath in mercy raised up such means for the helping of our infirmities; whereof others, better deserv-

ing

ing than our selves, have been destitute. Having therefore such helps so freely offered unto us, let us (if we desire to live more righteously before God) use them more carefully than we have done: endeavouring in the first place to know what is contained in each Petition of the Lords Prayer; that so, when we pray, we may know what that is for which we pray: and secondly, for our Faith, to know the full extent of every Article thereof; that so we may truly understand what this is, which we confess we believe: and because both of these are little available, except our piety be such as it ought to be, let us especially be exercised in the Commandments of God; that there-

thereby we may understand what we are commanded, and what forbidden. These are the direct courses which every true-hearted Christian ought to take, and which will one day prove truly comfortable, when others vain and frivolous, deceive us.

But because our piety and Religious behaviour is the chiefest thing required on our part, unto the leading of a new life, let us further see what rules we may yet observe for the directing thereof.

This Piety of ours is seen in these two things. 1. Our Words. 2. Our Works and Actions.

As for our Words, we should follow the counsels of Saint *Paul* to the *Ephesians*,
which

which is, that we avoid in our talk *all filthiness and foolish talking and jestings which are not convenient*, Eph. 4. 5. and he giveth a very good reason for it, 1 Cor. 15. 33. *because evil communications corrupt good manners*; and that oftentimes both in the speaker and hearer. But some will say, What? must we never use any pleasant Discourses? no Jestings at all? Yes, there is a time for that also; so it be according to the rule of Saint Peter, *such as God may thereby be glorified*, 1 Pet. 4. 11. Other ways we may not: for up our minds we may to an honest chearfulness, by civil and modest jestings, but obscene and prophane, which Saint Paul calls *filthiness*; H vain

vain and idle, which he terms foolish talking and jesting, which is not convenient; such I say, *ought not to be once named amongst us as becometh Saints*; for hereby both speaker and hearer are often stirred up to loose and vain gestures, or at leastwise to conceive and think of them, and so Gods Name is much dishonoured. Miserable it is to observe how frequently such speeches do pass for currant, under the assumed titles of merry Discourses: But let us remember what our Saviour Christ hath said, *Matth. 12. 36, 37. that by our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned, and that every idle word which we shall speak, we shall give an*

account thereof in the day of judgment. Must we give an account of our words, and shall we not then be careful of them? Must we answer for every idle word, and shall we fill up our Discourses with Blasphemies, with obscene and scurrilous jestings? If we must give an account of them, certainly these will lie heavy upon us: Wherefore let us rather with David, set a watch before our mouth, and bridle up our lips, that we offend not with our tongue: let us be careful that our words be such as Solomon commandeth, Prov. 25. 11. *Fitly spoken, which are like apples of gold in pictures of silver*; that is, such words as contain whole some matter, and are spoken

in a comely and decent manner, are as acceptable and pleasant to the ear of a judicious hearer, as silver pictures adorned with golden apples, are unto the eye of the beholder.

For our Works, we must as St. Paul counselleth, walk as children of the light, ever proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, Ephes. 5. 8, 10. Having our conversation honest among men, that they seeing our good works, may glorifie God thereby.

How to direct both our words and actions aright, we must chiefly observe these two things. 1. How to avoid that which is evil in both. 2. How to seek and obtain that which is good.

To

To avoid that which is evil, four Rules are especially to be observed.

The first, concerns the beginnings of evil; namely, that we watch and pray, according to our Saviour counsel and practice, *Matth. 26.*

41. Lest we enter into temptation, and so be drawn away to sin against God; for of our selves we are prone thereunto, and unable to avoid it: and if it go so far that we be once tempted to sin, and feel in us any motion thereunto, we should endeavour to resist this temptation in the beginning, and reason thus with our selves; Did not I lately receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, where I had a full pardon of all my sins

(past, sealed unto me) and where I yowed and promised to lead a new life before God; How then can I do this thing, and break my promise with God? I have put off my coat of sin, and therefore I may not (I will not) put it on again: thus ought we to resist temptations at the first, lest they get the dominion over us.

The second Rule concerns the occasion of evil, which we must necessarily avoid, if we desire to avoid the evil itself.

The occasions are diverse, but especially these two
 1. Idleness, from which proceed many (and these sometimes, hainous and crying) sins; which the Sun of

Syrach calleth therefore, *the teacher of much evil*, Ecclef. 33. 27. To avoid this, we must be careful to imploy our selves diligently in that vocation wherein God hath placed us; for otherwise, the Devil will be sure to take an occasion to tempt even the best of us; as we see in *David*, who was a man after Gods own heart; and yet, when he was walking on the roof of his house (while *Joab* and the rest were in the battle) he was tempted to commit Adultery with *Bathsheba* the Wife of *Uriah*, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. And how many do we daily see drawn away to lasciviousness, drunkenness, and such like vices by this occasion? Let us therefore carefully ex-

exercise our selves in our Vocation, that the Devil may not have an opportunity to set upon us.

2. Bad company, than which nothing almost is more forceable to draw us away to that which is evil; Let Joseph but live in Pharaohs Court, and he shall soon learn to swear by the Life of Pharaoh, Gen. 42. 15. and if Israel abide in Shittim, the people will soon commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, Num. 25. 1. wherefore God commandeth his people to go out of Babylon, lest they be partakers of their sins, Rev. 18. 4. And often are we partakers of other mens sins, by frequenting their society; yea, (which is miserable to
ob-

observe) divers of ingenu-
ous disposition, and civil be-
haviour, have by degrees been
drawn away to looseness
and riot, by associating them-
selves unfortunately with
vain and dissolute persons.
And we may herein observe
the policy of our enemy the
Devil: who, when he find-
eth any man well disposed of
himself, and not ready to
yield to others temptations,
will beset him (if he can pos-
sibly) with this snare, that so
he may either by the wicked
perswasions, or bad examples
of others, steal away his
heart, and allure him to that
which is evil, which should
be a forcible Caveat unto
us, to make us heedful what
company we fall into, and

H s

with

with whom we acquaint ourselves, if we have any care of our Souls: seasonable is the counsel of Solomon herein, who adviseth us. 1. Concerning the Examples of others, not to conform our selves unto them *by walking in their ways, but to avoid and pass away*, Prov. 4. 15. 2. Concerning their allurements, by no means to hearken unto them; *if sinners intice thee, consent thou not*. Prov. 1. 10. If they say, Come let us take our pleasure in this or that sort, let us go to such a place, where we may freely do what we will: *If they thus draw thee, walk not in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their paths*. 3. As for familiarity with others, he adviseth

viseth us to make no friendship
with an angry man, and with a
furious man not to go. Why?
lest thou learn his way, and get
a snare unto thy soul, Prov. 22.

24, 25. Wilt thou avoid
Gaming, Swearing, &c. then
shun that company wherein
those vices are practised, or
else thou wilt rather increase
them in thee. But some will
say, Such an one is my fami-
liar friend, and shall I leave
him? that will be taken un-
kindly; Shall I get my self
discredit, where I may avoid
it? Yes, be he never so near
unto thee; yet if he in his
courses forsake God, forsake
thou him, lest God forsake
thee: yet thou mayest therein
shew thy self a very friend
to him, in winning him from
his

his evil ways by thy forsaking of him; for so saith Saint Paul, 2 Thess. 3. 14. *If any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.* It may be when he seeth thee leave him, he will begin to think of his bad life and so be ashamed of it, and by degrees leave it; therefore leave bad company for their sakes also, as well as thine own.

The third Rule is, how we may restrain our selves when we are about to undertake any sinful action; and that is by setting before our eyes this Caveat, *God sees: for his eyes are over all*, Prov. 15. 3. and therefore whatsoever we do, we should consider that we do it in his presence: which, being con-

conſcionably conſidered, cannot but breed in us both reverence and watchfulneſs; reverence, in reſpect of his Maieſty: watchfulneſs, in reſpect of his all-ſeeing eye, that we offend him not, who will eſpy in us the leaſt fault; be it never ſo ſecretly kept from the world.

Again, conſider how merciful God hath ever been unto thee, in delivering thee from this or that danger, this or that ſin, whereinto thou muſt neceſſarily have fallen, if he had not upheld thee: and then answer the Devil when he tempteth thee, as *Jaſeph* did his wicked Miſtreſs, *How can I do this wickedneſs, and ſin againſt my God?* God hath been thus and thus merciful unto me, and ſhall I yet offend him:

him: and provoke him to anger? God forbid.

The fourth Rule is for our direction, when we are fallen into any sin, which is this: When we are overtaken with any sin (as who is not every day?) we should presently lament it, and not suffer it to go on any farther, lest it come to a custom, and so stick fast in us: this is a difference which *Solomon* putteth between the righteous and the wicked. *Prov. 24. 16.* *A just man, saith he, falleth seven times, and riseth up again; but the wicked shall fall into mischief: the just man, though he fall into any sin, riseth again by repentance, but the wicked sinketh deeper down, even to the pit of destruction.*

These

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These are the chiefest Rules to be observed for the avoiding of that which is evil.

The next thing, which we must look into, is, how we may obtain that which is good: Here we must principally observe these two things.

1. Make use of all occasions thereunto. 2. Make conscience of every good duty. As for the first, we must first, according to the example of St. Paul, Philippians 3. 14. *Use all diligence, that we may press towards the mark*, still endeavouring to be better: and when we find our selves deficient in the performance of any good duty (as God knows we are in all) we should do the same again, and endeavour to perform it more fervently, that
so

so we may come to a greater measure of godliness. Again, we should gladly embrace the company of good men, that by their example and advice, we may be brought to a sense and feeling of those sins which we commit; counting it a great Blessing of God, if thereby we at any time be cross'd in those sins, to which we are most addicted, as Gaming, &c. and ever esteem best of that company, not where our ears may be filled with prophane jesting, or tickled with superfluous conceits; but where our corruptions may be most roundly reprov'd, esteeming them our best friends, that will most plainly and faithfully put us in mind of our errors; which is the counsel of

of S. Paul to the Thessalonians, I beseech you (saith he, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13.) to know them which labour amongst you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake: which may be our direction for esteeming both of our familiar friends, and of our teachers; both which (if faithful) labour for our good in the Lord; by admonishing us, and both thereby deserve from us a true regard as a recompence of this their love: therefore if any man desire to be furthered in good duties, let him testifie it by loving such men.

2. If we desire to obtain that which is good, we must be careful that we make conscience

science (as of avoiding every evil) so of doing every good duty, be it never so little, endeavouring with St. Paul, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and men, Acts 24. 16. and labouring to keep not only some, but all Gods Commandments, according to Davids wish, Psal. 119. 5, 6. *O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep thy Statutes, so shall I not be confounded, while I have respect to all thy Commandments.* Let us not deceive our selves in thinking it sufficient, that we obey the Sabbath, and that we offend not God by swearing, stealing, or such like hainous offences: and yet in the mean time make no conscience of a lye, for our com-
modi-

modity, or of vain and idle discourses for delight, for if we thus do, it is certainly an argument of a bad heart.

But some perhaps will say, If I thus endeavour to carry my self in all things, if I now and then do not give a little way, I shall be accounted too precise and curious in matters which I need not. Be it so, yet be willing to undergo that censure, and esteem it safer to offend ungodly men by thy good life, than a righteous God by thy bad life: and though others account it to much preciseness, yet do thou not so: but rather consider, that God commandeth us to keep his precepts diligently, Psalm 119. 4. If diligently, then certainly there is nothing in his pre-

precepts superfluous; nothing which we may do, or not do, but every one, though of never so small matter, is to be performed of us: whosoever therefore shall endeavour to his power to keep the Commandments of God in every thing, is so far from being too precise, that he doth but what he is commanded.

To these Rules, for avoiding of evil, and seeking of good, we may add one more, as the Rule of all the rest, and of our whole life, and that is the word of God, which alone is able to direct us in the way to salvation, as David testifieth, *Psal. 119. 9.* Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? even by ruling himself after thy word. Wherefore let

us

us carefully read, meditate,
and confer about this Word,
and that often, accounting (as
well we may) every day lost,
wherein we learn not some-
thing out of it, ever desiring
more and more to be instruct-
ed therein, and account it a
great Blessing of God, that we
have the use of it so freely to
direct us in the way of salvari-
on. Neither let any man think
himself so learned, that he
needeth no farther instruction;
for the best of us comes short
of *David*, and yet he prayed
still to be instructed in the word
of the Lord, as we may see
throughout the 119. Psalm.
Again, if we did know more
then we do, yet we are dull
in the performance of what
we know; and therefore we
have

have need to read the same again and again, to stir us up to a daily practice hereof: but that we may so use the Word of God, as that it may be unto us the favour of life unto life; let us at all times, when we are about to read it, lift up our hearts to God by prayer, that he may give a Blessing to our endeavours, without which, whatsoever we do in this or any other thing, it will be so far from being profitable unto us, as that it will rather prove our ruine in the end.

He which shall thus set his heart to serve the Lord by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, by living honestly, righteously and soberly in this present world; he, which shall
thus

thus carefully receive the Sacrament in a right manner, and hear the word with diligence, devoting himself to God by Prayer in all things which he doth: he which shall thus make conscience of his ways in every thing, the Blessing of God rest upon him, as it needs must, and that peace of conscience (which no man knoweth but he that enjoys) ever attend him here, and everlasting peace and happiness crown him hereafter. *Amen.*

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